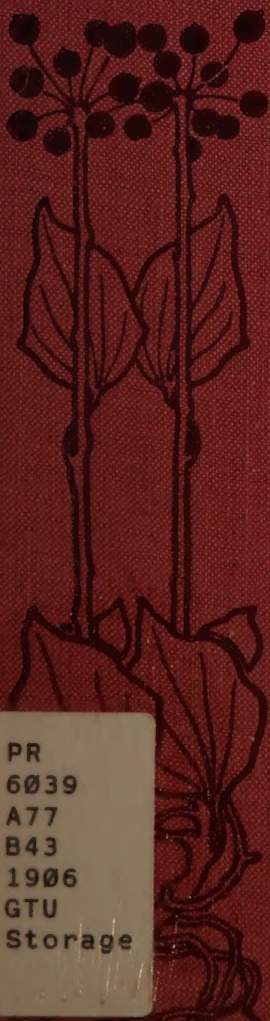
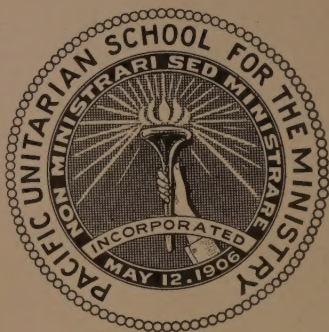


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BEE SONGS

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AND OTHER VERSE

BY

WILLIAM GEORGE TARRANT, B.A.



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To my Wife

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BEE SONGS.

PROLOGUE.

‘ BEE SONGS ’ are wee songs
Humm’d in hours of labour,—
Thy life and my life
Need a song, my neighbour.

Bees hum—‘ The day’s come,
‘ Noon and night are coming ;
‘ Thy work and my work
‘ Thrive the better humming.

‘ Buds break and birds wake,
‘ Bright are bloom and feather,—
‘ Thy way and my way
‘ Let us wing together.

‘ Wing light, and sing light
‘ Kisses, tears, and laughter ;
‘ Thy day and my day
‘ Shall be sweeter after.’

I SING OF ROSES.

(BALLADE.)

I SING of roses and of dew,
Of snow-white cloud and azure sky ;
Of daffodils divinely new,
And daisies with the golden eye ;
Of campion bold and violet shy,
Pale primrose and anemone,
That bloom for joy when cuckoos cry ;
Where'er they bloom, they bloom for me.

I sing of apple-blossom too,
Of honeysuckle climbing high ;
Of gorse that flames the winter thro' ;
Of iris plumes blown all awry
Where dimpled waters babble by ;
Of lupine sweet, and purple pea,
Beloved of bee and butterfly ;
Where'er they bloom, they bloom for me.

I sing of shades where wood-doves coo,
Of sunbeams where the pheasants lie ;
Of smiling eyes and lovers true,
And hearts that dance they know not why.
The singer's right let none deny,
For love is large and beauty free ;
I sing the flowers that never die,
Where'er they bloom, they bloom for me.

L'ENVOI.

Accept my song-flower,—where it grew
Some sister fancies fair may be ;
Say of them all, tho' frail and few,
' Where'er they bloom, they bloom for me.'

THE SANCTUARY.

It is a place of beauty rare,
For only truth inhabits there,
A place of peace and fancies kind—
The temple of the poet's mind.
There troops of shining angels come
And find, below, another home,
Where thoughts are pure as doth befit
The genius who within doth sit,
And words to gentle music move—
The ministers of faith and love.

Tho' for my sins I may not pass
Beyond the sacred porch, alas,
Beside the temple-door I wait
Not hopelessly disconsolate.

For, when the kindly heavens decree,
A waft of incense reacheth me,
A glory parts the veil and shows
A radiance fairer than the rose,
Whence comes a messenger divine
To touch these sinful lips of mine.

Then, for awhile, this mortal dress
Is shone upon with loveliness ;
An awful splendour fills my soul
As if I wore an aureole,—
So doth the Light that made the flow'r
Grant every heart one blossom-hour.
Awhile I see, as poets do,
The holy, beautiful, and true ;
And, ere the vision dies away,
I prophesy as well as they.

THE SWALLOW IS GONE.

THE swallow is gone, but the robin is singing,
Brown is the bracken, red-berried the rose ;
The beeches their crimson and golden leaves flinging,

Spangle the meadows where greenest it grows.
Down, down come the acorns, so plump and so
glossy ;

Up starts the thrush from the turf to the tree ;
And sunshine is gleaming on birchen boles mossy,
Sunshine in plenty, for you and for me.

The swallow is gone, but the skylark is left us—
See him, and hear him, aloft in the blue !
He says, if of courage the years have bereft us,
Still there is Sunshine for me and for you.
So now, when the ivy is starry with blossom,
Now in November's the time to be gay—
To keep a wee birdie atune in the bosom,
Singing as sweet as on Midsummer Day.

LIFE SAYS.

NOON—and the day is bright ;
June—and the year is crowned ;
Life is a-tiptoe, stands at height,
Smiles to the world all round.
Music of birds and brooks,
Laughter on vale and hill—
Laughter and music ? Farewell, books ;
Life says the best thing still.

‘ Out of the night, the morn ; ’
Hark, how the great word goes !
‘ Out of the soil, the rough black thorn,
‘ Out of the thorn, the rose.
‘ Out of the morn, the day,
‘ The noon-joy clear and strong ;
‘ Out of the dust the soul wins a way,
‘ Out of the soul, the song ! ’

JULIET.

O GO not yet, a moment stay,
Night is but young—why haste away !
The sentry stars ward off the day
And watch around the sky.

Ah, could'st thou know but half the fears
That dim thy Juliet's eye,
And how it fills my heart with tears
To say ' Good-bye ! '

I cannot yield thee, mine thou art !
Life is so sweet—why should we part ?
For, when thou goest, goes my heart
And leaves me here to die.
'Tis not the lark that greets thine ears
With shrill and tuneless cry,—
I cannot see him for my tears,
Say not ' Good-bye ! '

Ah, yes, it is the lark indeed !
Vainly I clasp thee, vainly plead ;
The stars have gone with traitor speed—
 One last, last kiss ; then—fly !
More light and light—the sun appears—
 I dare no more deny ;
Forgive, forget these foolish tears—
 Good-bye ! Good-bye !

CORDELIA.

LILIES, do ye mourn with me,
That so wondrous pale ye be ?
Rather smile in hope that I,
Seeing that, may cease to sigh.

Grieve ye that to you hath come
This—to love and yet be dumb,
While that others falsely kneel,
Loud with love they do not feel ?

Mourn no more, sweet flow'rs, that heav'n
Nought but love to you hath giv'n ;
Wisest wisdom rules above,
Giving all in giving love.

Bloom, but guard your secret well—
Poor the love that tongue can tell ;
Bloom your best, content to be
Fair for loving eyes to see.

Then, if blindness pass you by,
Then, oh then, if ye must die,
All that's kind and all that's true
Evermore shall mourn for you.

GOLDEN APHRODITE.

RED, red, the roses bloom,
Glow the land with yellow broom,
Blue-bells swing, with rich perfume
Heavily laden ;

Hark, how the larks on high,
Mad for Love, in raptures vie,
Sing of Love, all round the sky,
Glorious Maiden !

Love-music mortals sing,
While the rosy Seasons bring
Love, the queen of everything,
Gentle and mighty ;
Foam-born ! On land and sea
Nymphs and zephyrs wait for thee,
Goddess with the Graces Three,
Great Aphrodite !

Love's song shall never fail,
Throstle, linnet, nightingale,
Every bird in every vale,
Singing, obeys her ;

Here, there, and everywhere,
On the earth and in the air
All things beautiful and fair
Loyally praise her.

Love makes the daisies grow,
Grasses wave and breezes blow,
Stars to shine, and skies to glow
Sunset and morning ;
Wild-flow'rs and honey-bees,
Lily-buds and apple-trees,
Crystal springs and silver seas
Are her adorning.

Love has a smiling face,
Eyes of dew, and lips of grace,
Sunshine from her dwelling place
Vanishes never ;
Come, Love, and live with me,
Fill my heart with melody,
Dainty music meet for thee
Let me sing ever !

THE GARDEN SONG.

I FOUND a gate where roses grew,
I enter'd free, as lovers do ;
I sat me in the porch to sing,
As I am wont, a song of Spring.
I sang the founts of morn and bliss,
The heavens and all that in them is,
Down to that heaven-born child of mirth,
Our own dear, love-begotten earth.
But at the door a voice came near—
' Sing not, for Sorrow dwelleth here.'

Much marvell'd I, and turned to go,
Since lonely Sorrow will'd it so ;
And yet that morning garden fair
Held me a rose-bound prisoner there.

It seem'd the balm of grief and wrong,
The very paradise of song.
Alas, I might no longer wait ;
Slowly I reach'd the wicket gate—
' Come back,' the voice said, low and clear,
' Sing on, for Sorrow dwelleth here.'

And now, when shine the morning hours,
I sit and sing among the flow'rs,
For, by the law that bids them grow,
The pulses of the music flow.
The melody, it is not mine,
It owns an Author all-divine ;
The blackbird in the willow-tree
Singeth the self-same strain with me,
And sometimes comes a low refrain
Soft-echoed from the House of Pain.

INVOCATION.

ALL ye, my troubadours,
Song-makers true,
Sing ' Life is young again,
' Old love is new ! '
Laureates jubilant,
Choristers gay,
Come from the silence
And join me to-day.

Lyrists of Italy,
Bards of Provence,
Give me a madrigal
Just for this once.
Roses are rioting,
Who can be dumb
Now that the singing
Of summer is come ?

Poets of Portugal,
Singers of Spain,
Rhymers of Rhineland,
I call you again ;
Come, with a melody
Magical, free,
Glancing and dancing
With summer and me.

Sidney and Wither come,
Herrick, Carew,
Live with me, laugh with me,
Sing with me too ;
Live in the joy of life,
Laugh at its mirth,
Sing of the sweetness
Of love on the earth !

A PICTURE.

THEY are brighter than dew in the morning
When daisies look up to the sun,
They are softer than stars in the twilight
That come to us one by one ;
Oh, the eyes that I love are so tender
That neither the stars above,
Nor the dew-drops, can rival their shining,
For theirs is the light of love.

There's a smile that is sweeter than laughter,
A silence that's better than speech,
There's a picture of exquisite beauty
That nothing beside can reach,—

'Tis the smile on the lips of a lover,
'Tis the look that leaves nothing to say,
'Tis the face that the heart will remember
In the days that are far away !

ON LOAN.

' WITH some of us sick, and with most of us sad,
It hardly seems proper for one to be glad.'

Well, come, needy neighbour, at least you can
borrow !

I'll lend you a smile,—you can pay me to-morrow.

THE GAYEST SINGER.

(BALLADE.)

WHEN violets bloom beneath our feet
And April suns delightful shine,
Sweet birds, the revels to complete,
In artless harmony combine.

Then doth the shepherd's song incline
To echo every woodland call,
As if he were, by fate benign,
The gayest singer of them all.

Then up starts Robin to compete,
And trills his merry little line ;
The Lark springs warbling from the wheat,
Or from the dewy celandine ;
And hark, the Thrush in passion fine
Flutes, flutes again, to great and small ;
Not one the title would resign—
The gayest singer of them all.

But ah, what music now we greet,
What spells the ravish'd sense entwine !
The Nightingale, in his retreat,
Pours forth his melodies divine.
Say not the notes in sadness pine
That make so rich a madrigal,
But hail him in his sylvan shrine,
The gayest singer of them all.

L'ENVOI.

Now grant my song one grace of thine,
Lest at the last it sadly fall ;
Smile, and the title shall be mine—
The gayest singer of them all.

CHILD'S SPRING SONG.

IF I were a blackbird and lived in a wood,
I'd make it the happiest place that I could ;
I'd whistle, and carol, and warble all day,
Till all the world's trouble I warbled away.

If I were a swallow far over the sea,
I'd haste to the land that was waiting for me ;
And there I would build me the cosiest nest,
And gather my little ones warm to my breast.

If I were an angel and sang up on high,
I'd shine, if I might, like a star in the sky ;
And all that is fairest of all that is fair
Should be all the brighter because I was there.

And tho' I am neither an angel nor bird,
I'll sing the best music that ever was heard—
I'll laugh, and I'll love, and I'll try like a man
To make this world happy as long as I can.

LORENZO, THE MUTE.

LORENZO is a lover true
Yet never sings, as lovers do !
The reason is, that little elf,
Lorenzo, truly loves—himself.

THE PEDLAR.

LOVE stood, a pedlar, in the Fair
And offer'd me his winsome ware.
With random step and careless eye
I halted, look'd, and saunter'd by ;
For many another stood to sell
Gawds that were fine, and cheap as well—
Drums and trumpets, jewels and rings,
Ribbons and stars, and tinkling things ;
And these, if any, seem'd to be
The pleasures of the Fair for me.

But Love is bold, and Love is strong,
And loud he call'd above the throng :
' Come, buy of me thy heart's desire,
' Jewels that glow with deathless fire,

‘ Weapons of dauntless temper made,
‘ And rosy wreaths that never fade.’
I heard, and still I doubting heard ;
At last—I took him at his word.
His pack was mine ; I tripp’d away
Forgetting—what I had to pay.

But Love is true, and Love is wise,
And true must be the heart that buys,
And Love’s account, tho’ long delay’d,
Must at the last be fully paid.
His swords, alas, are forg’d for strife,
His rubies burn into the life,
His roses last a thousand years
But they are dew’d with bitter tears.
Ah, had I truly known the price,
Would I have purchas’d Paradise ?

BELOW BRIDGE.

THE morn shines bright o'er London town,
The breeze from the west is blowing,
And swiftly rush the waters brown
To the sea where I am going.

Dear land of home, no more in thee
The light of morn shall find me ;
Ah, many a land is fair to see,
But the best I leave behind me.

Well, here's good-bye to London town,
Good-bye—the parting's over,
And I shall be, when the sun goes down,
Beyond the lights of Dover.

But oh, sweetheart, that we should part !
But oh, that e'er I met thee !
Good-bye, good-bye,—but oh, my heart
Will break ere I forget thee.

BEST AND WORST.

FICKLE Summer, say no more,
Better now be going ;
Better than thy rain and roar
Honest Winter snowing !
For thy best is said,
And thy heart is dead.

Other foe my soul disdains,
But I fear a traitor ;
Rather than the love that feigns,
Welcome, honest hater !
For the worst is said
When the heart is dead.

ROSA LOQUITUR.

I'd rather be a rose than know,
As Balbus does, how roses grow,
Who walks the earth with half his mind
And leaves the wiser half behind.
A great anatomist is he,
And only knows anatomy ;
He knows the rose-bush from the root—
The stem, the leaf, the flow'r, the fruit ;
But little knows how little still
He knows the rose's miracle !

I'd rather live my hour than be
Doom'd to a fool's eternity,
Missing that finest touch of sense,
—The saving grace of reverence.

The gods are patient, yet their wrath
This most ironic magic hath—
To give the rose, but still deny
The seeing soul within the eye ;
While laughter shakes the thrones above,
To see a sage too wise to love !

THE IMAGE.

My heart is a mirror,
Thy love is the light,
In purity shining
By day and by night ;
The earth hath its glory
Of mountain and sea,
But mine is the image
Of thee, of thee !

The song that I bring thee
By loving is mine ;
My heart is an echo,
The music is thine ;
So sweet is the music,
My glad heart would be
A singer for ever
Of thee, of thee !

As thy heart is my heart,
As one soul the two,
And I must be faithful
Because thou art true ;
For Love is the Master
And maketh of me
A mirror, an echo
Of thee, of thee !

POOR PLEASURE.

Poor Pleasure lay sick, and was going to die,
Said all the Wise Men of the City ;
The Clever were busy discussing the why,
The Good were aghast at the pity.
With remedies many, and many a wile,
They sought to restore her, dear treasure ;
In vain, all in vain ; not a ghost of a smile
Came back to the lips of poor Pleasure.

Now, close to the way where in languor she lay,
A labourer followed his labour,
And cheerily, cheerily all through the day,
He gladden'd the heart of his neighbour.
Of course such a simpleton never was known,
Said the Good, and the Wise, and the Clever ;
But Pleasure got well, and she left them alone,
And wedded the Worker for ever.

MORNING MUSIC.

ROSES, in rosebuds sleeping unborn,
Wake into beauty, welcome the morn !
Daylight is dawning, shadows depart,—
Sunshine celestial, come to my heart !

Waving grass tipt with diamond dew,
Clouds silver-white on tenderest blue,
Glory below and glory above
Call us to wonder, worship, and love.

Children of sunshine, flowers of the field,
Tribute of incense gratefully yield ;
Song, in the wild-bird's bosom upstored,
Pour from the sky in praise of the Lord !

Thou too, my spirit, silent so long,
Break forth at last in blossom of song,—
Music of morning, innocent bright,
Sweet as the rose, and pure as the light.

CLEABARROW.

(‘ CLOVER-HILL.’)

AT Clover Hill there sings a rill
Amid the rocks and rushes,
And many a rose above it blows
And fills the bower with blushes.
Go, sing them east, and sing them west,
Thou rippling little rover,
But ever, ever sing thy best
Beside the Hill of Clover !

From tree to tree how fair to see,
Beyond the daisied meadow !
The lake shines bright in silver light,
The mountains stand in shadow.
May blessings fall on great and small
That happy valley over,
And still the dearest bliss of all
Rest on that Hill of Clover.

IN HIGH HALL.

HE sang for his supper, and little he got,
For some of them heard him, but most of them
not ;

A few who were supperless lik'd him the best—
Good supper was more to the taste of the rest !
The generous few said his fortune was hard,
They wove him a laurel, and hail'd him a bard.
And thus, in the light of the banquet awhile,
He sang of his best, with a sad little smile ;
Till Nature, good nurse, took the wreath from
his head,
And kiss'd him to silence, and put him to bed.

UNAWARE.

How wise is he, and more than wise,
How blest beyond compare,
Who never saw with foolish eyes
God's angel unaware !

At break of day a stranger came
And knock'd upon my door ;
I did not know his angel-name
Or see the wings he wore.

Still for a little while I mused,—
His glance was kind and good,
And with the morning light suffused
All radiant he stood.

'Come in, come in,' at last I said,
'My servant thou shalt be' ;
The angel meekly bow'd his head
And took my livery.

And every trivial, weak behest
He serv'd with placid brow,
But what he was I never guess'd—
I hardly know it now.

About my dwelling, hour by hour,
I felt that Presence move ;
I learn'd to wonder at his power,
I almost learn'd to love.

Blind, blind of heart, I could not see,
Until, at close of day,
He left my ignorance to me
And, sighing, pass'd away.

His shining foot-prints now I trace
Upon the household floor ;
But ah, that great and holy face
Will smile on me no more.

EBB TIDE.

THE fruit's on the bough,
The wheat's in the sheaf,
A mist's on the meadow,
A flush on the leaf ;
The valley is silent,
The river's at rest,
The tide of the sunshine
Ebbs into the west.

The bird in the blue
Flies weary and slow,
All wearily homeward
The harvesters go ;
The poppies are fading,
The rose-petals fall—
Gay poppies, sweet roses,
Farewell to them all !

Farewell to the rose
Once blooming for me ;
My heart, it is autumn
And sunset for thee ;
Thy harvest is over,
The long shadows creep,
The world's growing lonely—
O heart, let us sleep.

THE LESSON.

O SORROW, with thy mournful eyes
Thou mad'st me weep ; come, make me wise,
Nor let me lose a little gain
Dear-purchas'd at the price of pain.
Tell me (if it be true ; if not,
Tell me the truth, no matter what)
Tell me thy function is to give
A holier grace to all who live,
Riches that laughter never knew,
Nor earth, nor heav'n, except for you.

Then tell me, Sorrow, once again
Their names that met thee not in vain,
(If it be true, as some declare,
That they have found thee more than fair)

And I will of their memory weave
A charm my vigil to relieve ;
Whate'er another dawn may bring,
Their songs of darkness I will sing,
Till, Sorrow's little scholar, I
Sleep, sleep to Sorrow's lullaby.

THE THRUSH IN WINTER:

THE thrush, the thrush is singing,
The winter sky is blue,
At one am I with bird and sky
And I am singing too.

He flutes it blithe and merry
Among the branches bare,
But oh, for me, that I should be
Blithe in a cage of care!

The frosted fields are sleeping ;
Dream they on days like these,
By sunbeams kiss'd thro' golden mist,
Of clover-bloom and bees ?

Among the ice-bound rushes
The silent brook steals on,
Its edges fray'd, its flow'rs decay'd,
And all its music gone.

What is it sets us singing,
The lonely thrush and me,
Me in the throe of mortal woe,
Him on the leafless tree ?

SILENCE.

My little life, a little while,
Was fill'd with beauty by a smile,
Was fill'd with music by a tone—
A music lost, a beauty gone.

The noise of Babel, night and morn,
Rolls round my lonely life forlorn—
The rush of toil, the idle mirth
That mocks the silent grief of earth.

'Tis but a moment since I heard
How lovely is one little word ;
'Tis but a moment since I knew
How like a god a mortal grew.

A moment gone, and gone is all ;
Into the void in vain I call ;
Across the sea without a shore
The ship is gone for evermore.

Gone, and the roaring billows roll !
But Silence parts us, soul from soul,
And all the Babel tongues I hear
Shall never break that Silence, dear !

THE ONLY GIFT.

A HEART of love I bring to Thee—

Forbid me not,

A heart of love though mine it be—

Forbid me not ;

Thy poorest servant here below,

I bring the only gift I know.

Though all the stars in heaven are Thine,

Forget me not ;

Though but a little world is mine,

Forget me not ;

The flower is safe beneath the sky,

And safe within Thy love am I.

Ah, when my lamp of life burns low,
Forsake me not ;
When stumbling in the dark I go,
Forsake me not ;
Come then, and fill my heart anew
With love like Thine, for ever true.

My only gift to Thee I bring—
Forbid me not ;
One prayer I breathe, one song I sing—
Forbid me not ;
I sing the love that loves me still,
I pray to know and do Thy will.

THE FORGET-ME-NOTS.

WHEN I lay sick and full of care,
And thought my Friend forgot,
I made a little flower of prayer—
My poor '*Forget-me-not*' ;
And, though sweet Faith was vexed with me
And chid me for my fears,
She took on high, for Him to see,
That flower bedew'd with tears.

Ah, weary night ! My restless mind
Went flitting to and fro,
Some token of His love to find,
Whose love I needed so ;
But, as the long dark hours crept by,
Each left me more forlorn,
Until the flush was in the sky
That ushers in the morn.

Then came sweet Faith, and with her brought
A sheaf of flowers divine,
The token of a wiser Thought,
A truer Heart than mine ;
And all the shadows passed away
In which my love forgot
The Love that sends me every day
Its great 'FORGET-ME-NOT.'

CUCKOO SONG.

COME cuckoo, come cuckoo, April's here,
Daffodils dance by the rippling mere ;
Primroses yellow and violets blue
Smile through the rain for the love of you.

Come, for the blossom is fair to see ;
Whiter than snow is the cherry-tree ;
Green are the crests of the hazel vale,
Nodding to welcome the nightingale.

Come, cuckoo, come, I have waited long,
Waited and wearied for April song ;
Winter has aged me with silent pain,
Come, cuckoo, make me a child again.

Wilt thou not, wanderer, come once more
Bringing the charm of the days of yore ?
Yea, thou art coming o'er land and sea,
But there's another—oh, where is he ?

Come cuckoo, come with the rainbow-rain ;
Singer, invisible, sing again ;
Winter is over, the flowers appear—
Cuckoo—hark ! *Cuckoo*—he's here, he's here !

LIFE'S STORY.

A NEST of love and kisses sweet,
A grassy path for little feet,
A wonder at a world so wide,
A drawing closer, side by side,
A dream, a song, a spark of fire,
A heart aflame with fierce desire,
A wreath of roses, dipt in dew,
For you and me, for me and you !

A day of toil, a night of pain,
A hope, a fear—alike in vain,
A greeting smile, a parting tear,
A friend afar, a sorrow near,
A burden long—till burdens cease,
A little resting-place of peace,
And then, dear heart, Eternity
For me and you, for you and me !

THE MIRACLE.

THEIR hearts were hungry ; mine was sad,
So little could I do ;
At last I offer'd all I had—
A barley-loaf or two.

Love smil'd, and bless'd and brake the bread,
And lo, a miracle !
A thousand weary souls were fed,
And I had plenty still.

YOUTH SAILS.

THE ship lay waiting at the quay
To bear my Youth away from me,
And all too sure the wind did blow
The way the fatal bark must go.
Down to the harbour Youth and I
Strode on in silent company,
For he had been so long my friend
I never thought that it would end,
And I had been so much a boy
I scarce knew anything but joy.

‘Farewell,’ at last I sighed in pain,
‘We two shall never meet again.
‘Farewell the quip, the song, the dance,
‘The lightsome laugh, the sportive glance,

‘ The poet’s dream, the tender heart—
‘ That dearest thing from which to part.
‘ Where these and thou, my Youth, must go
‘ As I grow old not mine to know.
‘ Go, seek thy dreamland haven fair,
‘ And leave me, waking, to despair.’

Thus I, forlorn, upon the strand ;
But Youth, embark’d, still held my hand
And, half in jest, and wholly wise,
He flash’d new courage from his eyes,
And told my heart the secret there
That conquers time and kills despair.
Then, as the vessel felt the tide,
He drew me upward to his side !
And now, for ever, Youth and I
Sail on, in jocund company.

A CITY DITTY.

COME, Sparrows, light-hearted and lusty,
Let's twitter together to-day,
And chirrup the weather away,
So gusty and dusty !

The Lark's gone to look for a daisy,
The Starling's a-mope in the tree,
And all, save you Sparrows and me,
Seem lazy or crazy.

Dame Swallow—just like her—has flitted,
Has flutter'd from town in a fuss,
Ay, leaving her eaving to us,
Has quitted, half-witted.

Sir Throstle, far-off in his hollow,
Has nothing to sing or to do
But, sulky, to wish that he too
Might follow the swallow.

But we jolly birds of a feather,
Tho' heavy as lead is the sky,
Have grit enough yet to defy
Together the weather.

We know, you and I, there are many
Who glance with contemptuous airs
At sparrows like us ; but who care
A penny for any !

Content with a life of endeavour
Let's cheerily chirp thro' the day ;
'Tis well to be busily gay,
If never be clever !

Should we fly away, 'twere a pity,
For how would poor street-dwellers live
With nobody cheerful to give
The city a ditty ?

So, chirp we, in dry days and wet, Sirs,
For bad weather goes, if it comes ;
With thanks let us pick up our crumbs,
And fret, Sirs, forget, Sirs !

IBERIA.

I'm going to my castle, Miss,
I prithee come with me,
'Tis in a richer land than this,
And finer far to see ;
The skies are blue, the clouds are few,
The very showers are fair ;
And all my castle needs is you,
To make perfection there.

'Where is your castle, gallant Sir,
And where that land so gay ?'
For any season'd traveller
It is not far away.
So come with me, and you shall see
I do not boast in vain—
The land's the Land of Reverie,
The castle is in Spain.

‘ O merry dreamer, fare you well,
‘ And happy may you be ;
‘ The lovely land of which you tell
‘ Is not the land for me !
‘ Its flow’rs so fine shall ne’er be mine
‘ Tho’ you may count them dear
‘ How bright soe’er their gold may shine,
‘ It is not current here.’

I may not blame you, gentle Miss,
I take your greeting fair—
Your side of happiness is this,
But mine is over there ;
And all the gold that can be told
I heartily disdain
Beside the treasure that I hold,
For ever mine, in Spain.

OLD YEAR'S SILVER.

WHY, Willow, silvered thus
While December's still with us?
Prudence would advise delay,
Strict economy, to-day;
For to-morrow may be snow,
Frosty fog and wintry woe.
Nature's method should be wise,
Brimming with moralities,
Hints of saving, saving still,
Housewif'ry made visible;
But, if once I may demur,
This is prodigal of her!

'Nay, mortal, never fear';
Thus I hear, or seem to hear

Winter's silver'd Willow say,
'Beauty blossoms when it may ;
'Nature's prudence is to give,
'Freely spend, and largely live.
'Say it is not Spring I see,
'Yet it shall be Spring for me ;
'Lest my silver, held too fast,
'Should not find exchange at last !
'Lavish love, Sir, while you may ;
'Spend to have another day.'

SWEET MAID SPRING.

THE willow-wren is back again,
The tit sings in the tree,
The dormouse stretches in his den
And wonders what can be!
And out he creeps, and loud he cheeps,
So glad is everything,
When over Winter's shoulder peeps
The sweet maid Spring.

The elm is drest in russet crest,
And rubies tip the lime,
The wind is blowing from the west
To bring the budding time;
The willow white is silken bright,
The alder-tassels swing,
And nearer, nearer, dances light
The sweet maid Spring.

Come, happy maid, in flow'rs array'd,
Come dance along the lea ;
Come, bring the sunshine and the shade,
And bring a song to me ;
Come, bring a song, and dance along,
Till all shall dance and sing
And laugh, the merry May among,
With sweet maid Spring !

THE LYRIC.

HARK ! From his dewy bed arising
The first faint blush of morning coy to greet,
The lark, the sleeping earth surprising—
How sweet, how sweet !

His not to wait full daylight splendour
Ere he his life's love-treasure pours below,
That strain exultant, pure, and tender,
Ah no, ah no !

O Soul of mine, O bird divine,
Leave to the night its pining ;
Away, away to greet the day,
And revel in its shining.

It shines so fair, since Love is there,
The dawn that dieth never ;
The night is gone, go singing on
The song of love for ever !

CHILD'S SUMMER SONG.

SWEET throstle is calling—‘ Good-day, good-day ! ’

Red robin's atune in the tree ;

I'm happy that I can be happy as they,

And sing, while they're singing to me.

I'm singing to say—‘ Sweet throstle, good-day ;

‘ All singers together are we.’

The blue sky is shining for me, for me ;

For me come the soft summer show'rs ;

And I am as happy as happy can be,

For earth's like a garden of flow'rs.

Come, join in the glee ; be happy with me,

And sing of this bright world of ours !

There's somebody sighing—‘ Alas, alas ’ ;

For somebody thinks the world bad ;

Come throstle, and robin, and flow'rs in the grass,

We'll show him the way to be glad ;

And shadows shall pass, and none sigh ‘ Alas,’

For nobody's heart shall be sad.

THE LADY WITH THE MASK.

THERE is a Lady with a Mask,
Methinks I know her well,
Altho', as often as I ask,
Her name she will not tell.

Her name she hides, her kith and kin ;
She seems to dwell alone ;
Some say she hath a sister twin,
Some that the two are one.

Her robe is changeful in its hue,
The stuff is rich and rare ;
I used to think her changeful too,
For all she look'd so fair.

But now I know, while many a mood
Brings many a change to me,
My Lady still is true and good,
The soul of constancy.

I met this Dame without a name
In childhood's April day ;
She play'd beside me in my game—
At least I thought it play.

And when my dancing days began
We were the blithest pair ;
For many a maid hath danc'd with man,
But never a maid like her.

She goes with magic in her feet,
And music in her tongue ;
Hers is the voice of all that's sweet,
The heart of all that's young.

Now I grow old, and dance no more,
Our gossip groweth wise ;
And kinder than in days of yore
Appear those wondrous eyes.

Yea, thro' the Mask those eyes I see,
They make my pulses stir ;
Methinks the Lady knows of me
More than I know of her.

She knows—and still she doth desire
(If what I guess be true)
Not only that I should admire,
But be her lover too.

O Lady, Lady with the Mask,
Thou know'st I love thee well ;
Am I for ever doom'd to ask
A name thou wilt not tell ?

ROSEMARY, THAT'S FOR REMEMBRANCE.

CANDIDE has forgotten his garden,
'Tis terribly running to seed,
The soil is beginning to harden,
The lawn is a tangle of weed.

My friend, are your wits on a journey
In search of the good and the fair?
Well, linger a little at Ferney,
And see what a garden is there!

With beauty of roses around it,
With fragrance of sweet mignonette,
No wonder the honey-bees found it,
No wonder they hum in it yet.

Then, back to your hoeing and sowing,
'Tis half the world's pleasure to please;
Remember, the season is going,
And think, my Candide, of the bees!

THE NETTLE.

All things have uses, I suppose,
The nettle, and the regal rose ;
And he who likes the nettle may,—
The rose for me, that's all I say !

Close by a rose a nettle grew,
And throve apace, as nettles do ;
Until at last he claim'd to be
One of the rose's company.
Then she in wonder turn'd her head,
And gravely to the nettle said :
' It grieves me, Sir, to find thee thus
' Upon our peace presumptuous.
' Know that thy presence, borne too long,
' Doth rob the garden of its song.

‘ No nightingale near thee will sing,
‘ Whose only pleasure is—to sting.’
‘ Oho ! ’ he jeer’d, with venom’d scorn,
‘ And what about my lady’s thorn ! ’

The rose in silence blush’d, asham’d
In nettle-kinship to be claim’d ;
But lo, the gard’ner with a frown
Came by, and chopp’d the rascal down.
If I were gard’ner for a day
I’d chop some other weeds away.

THE SONG OF THE HIVE.

HAIL to the Worker,
Him honour alone ;
Hail, to the Worker,
And death to the Drone !
The Singer's a Worker,
Whose song is a sword
To strike at the foe
In the name of the Lord.

Hail, to the Worker
Whose work is his best ;
Hail, to the Worker
Who works with the rest !
The Singer's a Worker,
Whose song is a fire
That gladdens the true man
And scorches the liar.

Hail, to the Worker,
The faithful and strong ;
Hail, to the Worker
Whose deed is a song !
The Singer's a Worker,
Whose song is a deed,
A flower of the heart,
And a flower with a seed.

Hail, to the Singer,
The prophet of power ;
Whose song is a sword,
And a fire, and a flower.
But hail, to the Worker ;
A singer is he
Whose song is the best song
That ever shall be !

CLOVER BLOSSOM.

A MAN and a bee awoke at morn ;
The bee was hungry, the man forlorn.

A whisper came to the earth below—
'Come, let us make the clover blow !'

A smile responsive lit the hill,
And three little leaves began to thrill.

A myriad pulses came from the sun,
With flame of life in every one.

A million years within the soil
Came back to second the solar toil.

A breeze, a flush, a joy of birth—
And the clover blossom'd upon the earth !

The bee went forth to his honey bread,
The soul of man was comforted.

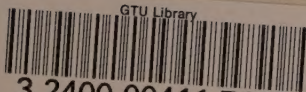
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